

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A flanged connection ~~for fixing to connect~~ a gas-filled spring in a machine tool, ~~the~~ said flanged connection comprising an upper flange half ~~and~~ a lower flange half, a fixing element, and a locking ring, said upper flange half and said lower flange half each ~~include~~ including a through-opening designed to receive at least a portion of the gas-filled spring, said upper flange half and said lower flange designed to be secured together, said upper flange half and said lower flange half designed to engage the gas-filled spring when said upper flange half and said lower flange are secured together, said locking ring designed to engage said fixing element and at least one of said flange halves when said upper flange half and said lower flange are secured together, said locking ring designed to secure the gas-filled spring by at least partial insertion into a groove of complementary design around the gas-filled spring while being fixed in ~~positioned~~ position between said upper flange half and said lower flange half when said upper flange half and said lower flange are secured together, said fixing element designed to movably engagable with at least one of said flange halves when said upper flange half and said lower flange half are secured together, said fixing element designed to apply a clamping force on said locking ring that is positioned at least partially around the gas-filled spring when said upper flange half and said lower flange ~~designed to be~~ are secured together, said locking ring and said fixing element ~~are~~ being at least two separate components, said fixing element designed to movably engage and apply a contact force against said locking ring when said upper flange half and said lower flange ~~designed to be~~ are secured together.

Claims 2-4 (Canceled).

5. (Currently Amended) The flanged connection according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said flange halves on its inside has a section inclined in relation to the central axis of the flanged connection, said inclined section designed to bring a correspondingly inclined section on the outside of said fixing element into engagement in order to produce the clamping force, said inclined sections designed to be movable relative to one another when said upper flange half and said lower flange are secured together.

6. (Previously Presented) The flanged connection according to claim 5, wherein said fixing element has a groove running along its outside and designed to bring a projecting part arranged on the inside of one of said flange halves having the inclined section into engagement.

7. (Previously Presented) The flanged connection according to claim 1, wherein said fixing element has a recess along its inside designed to receive at least a portion of said locking ring.

8. (Previously Presented) The flanged connection according to claim 1, wherein said flanged connection is fitted to the machine tool by at least one fastener, said at least one fastener designed to generate the clamping force between said fixing element and the gas-filled spring and to generate a contact force between said fixing element and said locking ring.

9. (Previously Presented) The flanged connection according to claim 1, wherein the clamping force is designed to prevent rotation of the gas-filled spring.

10. (Currently Amended) A method of fixing a gas-filled spring in a machine tool, by which method an upper flange half and a lower flange half of a ~~flange~~ flanged connection which can be joined together are fitted at least partially around and engage the gas-filled spring and a locking ring arranged between the flange halves is at least partially fitted around the gas-filled spring in a groove of complementary design and is fixed between ~~the~~ said flange halves securing the gas-filled spring, wherein, when joining together ~~of~~ said flange halves, a clamping force is applied around the gas-filled spring by a fixing element ~~supplementing the~~ that applied a force on said locking ring, said locking ring and said fixing element ~~are~~ being at least two separate components, said fixing element designed to movably engage and apply a contact force against said locking ring when said upper flange half and said lower flange ~~designed to be~~ are secured together, said fixing element designed to movably engagable with at least one of said flange halves when said upper flange half and said lower flange half are secured together.

Claims 11-13 (Canceled).

14. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 10, wherein a section inclined in relation to the central axis of the flanged connection on the inside of at least one of said flange halves is brought into engagement with a correspondingly inclined section on the

outside of said fixing element, said fixing element being applied around the gas-filled spring with the clamping force and where appropriate being applied against said locking ring with a contact force, said inclined sections designed to be movable relative to one another when said upper flange half and said lower flange are secured together.

15. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 14, wherein a groove running along the outside of said fixing element is brought into engagement with a projecting part arranged on one of said flange halves having the inclined section.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein the clamping force is generated when said flanged connection is fitted to the machine tool and that the clamping force is of a predefined magnitude.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 16, wherein the magnitude of the clamping force is adjusted by adjusting the tightening torque of fasteners used for fitting the flanged connection to the machine tool.

18. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein said clamping force serves to prevent rotation of the gas-filled spring.

19. (Currently Amended) A flanged connection designed to connect a spring

arrangement having a circular outer body to a machine tool, said flanged connection comprising an upper flange half, a lower flange half, a fixing element, and a locking ring, said upper flange half and said lower flange half each include a through-opening designed to receive at least a portion of the body of the gas-filled spring, said upper flange half and said lower flange designed to be secured together, at least one of said flange halves including an inclined section in an inside face that faces the body of the gas-filled spring, said inclined section inclined in relation to a central axis of said flanged connection, said locking ring designed to be at least partially inserted into a groove on an outer surface of the body of the gas-filled spring, said fixing element designed to movably engage said inclined section and apply a clamping force on said locking ring that is positioned in the groove on the outer surface of the body of the gas-filled spring when said upper flange half and said lower flange are secured together, said clamping force designed to at least partially secure the gas-filled spring to said flanged connection and to inhibit movement of said gas-filled spring in said flanged connection, said locking ring having a generally circular cross-sectional shape, said locking ring and said fixing element are at least two separate components.

20. (Currently Amended) The ~~flange~~ flanged connection as defined in claim 19, wherein said through-opening in at least one of said flange halves is circular.

21. (Previously Presented) The flanged connection as defined in claim 19, wherein said fixing element includes a recess, said recess designed to receive at least a portion of said

locking ring.

22. (Previously Presented) The flanged connection as defined in claim 20, wherein said fixing element includes a recess, said recess designed to receive at least a portion of said locking ring.

23. (Previously Presented) The flanged connection as defined in 19, wherein said flange halves are connected to by at least one fastener.

24. (Previously Presented) The flanged connection as defined in 22, wherein said flange halves are connected to by at least one fastener.

25. (Currently Amended) The flanged connection as defined in 19, wherein said fixing element only engages said upper flange half when said upper flange half and said lower flange half are secured together.

26. (Currently Amended) The flanged connection as defined in 24, wherein said fixing element only engages said upper flange half when said upper flange half and said lower flange half are secured together.

27. (Previously Presented) The flanged connection as defined in 19, wherein said flanged connection includes only one fixing element and only one locking ring.

28. (Previously Presented) The flanged connection as defined in 26, wherein said flanged connection includes only one fixing element and only one locking ring.

29. (New) The flanged connection as defined in claim 19, wherein said fixing element is designed to move downwardly toward said locking ring and apply said clamping force on said locking ring when said upper flange half and said lower flange half are secured together.

30. (New) The flanged connection as defined in claim 28, wherein said fixing element is designed to move downwardly toward said locking ring and apply said clamping force on said locking ring when said upper flange half and said lower flange half are secured together.

31. (New) The flanged connection as defined in claim 19, wherein said flanged connection includes only one fixing element and only one locking ring.

32. (New) The flanged connection as defined in claim 30, wherein said flanged connection includes only one fixing element and only one locking ring.

33. (New) The flanged connection as defined in claim 19, wherein said lower flange half includes a recess designed to receive at least a portion of said locking ring.

34. (New) The flanged connection as defined in claim 32, wherein said lower flange

half includes a recess designed to receive at least a portion of said locking ring.